

Outlaws

Uintah County Historical Society Meeting

Undated, only one speaker identified

Dick DeJournette: Buried money wasn't the only treasure buried in Brown's Hole. My dad used to own Sears Canyon years ago and a fellow by the name of Bill Luckinbill used to work for him. He tells the story that my dad had been to Rock Springs after a load of supplies and he came up through the Sears Canyon with a four-horse team. He was loaded down with supplies, but he also had a keg or two of whiskey along with him. He got awful drunk before he got clear up out of Sears Canyon, so he stopped and hid a ten-gallon keg of whiskey. When he got to camp, he was so drunk he had forgotten where he hid it. They hunted for forty years for that keg of whiskey and as far as I know it's still there.

At Castle Gate there were a lot of miners working in the mines. They would bring the payroll in every so often on the train and when they came in with the payroll on the train, they had a certain signal toot on the whistle to let the ones who needed to know know that the payroll was on the train. Butch Cassidy and Elza Lay were working on a ranch over there that winter, on the same ranch my father was working, for Meeks and Murin. They were two Dutchmen and Murin was a good old guy, but Meeks, some of the Meeks outfit were about half outlaw themselves. In fact one of the Meeks boys completely outlaw (Bob).

Anyway, they were working on this ranch not too far out of Price. Butch Cassidy was born in 1867 and my dad was born in 1868, there was only a year difference in their ages. Anyway, they were working together and every so often they would go to town and do their thing. Little did Dad know that they were planning this robbery. He had a big gray horse and they tried to dicker him out of the horse. He wouldn't sell or anything so Butch said, "Let me borrow that horse. Let me use him this winter." Dad said, "Sure, no problem." In fact, they hinted to him that something was going on, but they wouldn't tell him what, so he wouldn't join with them. That's how close my dad came to bein' an outlaw.

They would take this horse into town and they would stand around with this crowd of miners waiting for the payroll. They got the horses used to the steam blowin' out of the train engine, the whistles and the people, to where those horses weren't too afraid.

It went on towards spring and they decided it was time to rob the payroll. They went into town, got all ready, and the train came in, but it blew the wrong signal. That was the day the payroll was supposed to be on the train. So, they backed off and went back out to the ranch, and came in the next day. The train blew the right signal and pulled up there by the platform where the payroll car was stopped. [They] got off their horses and when the guards came off with the money, they told them this was a holdup.

There was a hundred miners standing there whose money they were stealing. Well, not really because the company had to make that money good. Anyway, there was a hundred miners standing around and these guys were taking their money. One of the guards tried to get by and they knocked him down with a gun. They got two bags of gold and one bag of silver dollars. Elzy got on his horse and started to take off. This gray horse of Dad's, that Butch had, bolted and went with him. So, here's Butch standing all by himself with the bag of gold under his arm and a pistol on these people telling them, "Don't anybody make a mistake, everything's gonna be all right." So, Elzy seen what happened and he brought the horse back. He jumped on the horse

and they took off.

They formed a posse in Price and another in Castle Gate and one in Castle Dale. They went twenty-five miles down through toward the San Rafael and they had a fifteen-year-old boy stationed there with fresh horses. They had sent him down there several days in advance. They told him, "Stay right there, don't leave no matter what, we will be here. It might take us a month and we might be here tomorrow, but you stay here and wait."

They got down there at evening and there the boy was with fresh horses. They traded horses took off and made it into Robbers Roost. The two posses ran together in dark that night had a shootout, shot one of their horses in the hip, didn't kill each other luckily. When they found out what was goin' on, they gave up and went back home. Butch and Elza made it on into the Roost with the loot.

In the meantime the boy came back to the ranch, turned the horses loose. The officers went out to this ranch and found the horses, dust-covered and sweaty. They asked old man Murray where those horses had been. He said, "I don't know. My ranch hands have been usin' them." The officers said, "They are suspected of being used in a hold up." Murray said, "Those are good boys, they wouldn't do anything like that." "I know they wouldn't, but if they did I'm glad they got away." They were pretty well liked.